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Sumner's More Excellent Way.

The Editor's Table of the New England Magazine for October is devoted wholly to a discussion of "Charles Sumner's More Excellent Way," and a vindication of the great statesman's position on "armed peace" against the criticism of President Eliot in his Alumni dinner Speech. The Editor says:

"With President Eliot, therefore, we should be slow to believe that we have any long or fundamental controversy. But with his word at Harvard in June, with any reflection upon Sumner's argument in "The True Grandeur of Nations," we do have controversy. We can think of nothing more dangerous or deplorable, especially at this time in America, than encouragement to our educated youth to view that great argument and vision as vicious or fallacious. We believe that in the line of Sumner's thought lies the hope of the world; and we believe that those who think as Sumner thought, should, without recourse to any generalities, to anything remote in time or place, apply that principle firmly and sweepingly to the situation through which the republic has been passing and the situation which confronts us to-day.

We have spent \$300,000,000 in a war with Spain. We are in the outer circles of the maelstrom of a policy which means larger armies, larger navies, costlier forts and more of them, and all the paraphernalia of the old world militarism which we have prided ourselves on being free from, -with the corresponding burdens of taxation, the devotion to waste and destruction of the immense resources which might otherwise go to development and progress. The man who does not see that we are in the outer circles of this maelstrom is a fool; and the man who, seeing it, has no forebodings is not a student of history. Is this way of spending money, which is now proposed to the republic,-to put Sumner's question directly to ourselves, — a wise way? Is it protective, is it constructive, is it good business, is it common sense, does it pave a good road into the future, is it the economical and promising way to secure the results we claim to aim at, will it make us a truer and safer democracy, and will it help the world? Was Sumner right, was Longfellow right, or was he not, in claiming that if half the wealth bestowed on camps, given to maintain



armies and navies, were given to redeem the human mind, to educate the human race, there would soon be no need of armies and navies?"

"If our republic is to be true to itself, if we are to help civilization forward and not backward, then the young men of our universities and all of us who look at war and national defence and national grandeur in the old way have got to be born again, nothing less than that,—baptized with the spirit wherewith Charles Sumner was baptized, and have our eyes opened to see that his way is the only right or sensible or efficient way, and that now we are wasting our substance and defeating ourselves. The revolution in the point of view is as radical as the difference between Ptolemy and Copernicus; but when we go through it, things fall at once into order, we find ourselves in a rational world with right means for right ends, and our old notions of what

is wise and prudent and necessary for the defence and upbuilding and influence of the nation instantly dissolve, stamped all as vicious and fallacious. Our thoughts on what it is that makes a nation strong need, almost all of them, to be turned inside out. Our economies and generosities are all Ptolemaic. We boast of public and private munificences in education and philanthropy. to understand that we are yet in the kindergarten of munificence as concerns all positive, constructive and real things. It would sometimes seem as if, were the devil privileged to organize the world so as to thwart struggling men most effectually, wasting their accumulations and cutting forever the margin of civilization, he would choose precisely what he now sees, the dominance of false political ideals and of gross unintelligence as to how men and nations should spend their money."